

tolerably good order, to receive the present. There were ⁰⁰⁰ undoubtedly some very tall men amongst them, but what ¹⁴² struck me particularly was their splendid development of chest and arms. Although the wind was very sharp, many of them had their mantles thrown back in a careless way, leaving their naked chests exposed in the air, and appeared not the least incommoded. They readily recognised me for an Englishman, coming and examining me closely, and asking for tobacco with a broad grin on their faces, exposing a wonderfully clean and regular set of teeth. My gratifying ⁰⁰⁰ their importunate requests for tobacco made Sam very jealous, and for some time he bothered me with remarks such as 'Me very cold, no got poncho,' 'Me no got knife, me no got "pellon"' (saddle-cloth), until, finding it useless to beg, he relapsed into sullen silence. A smoke of the pipe, however, brought him back to his usual cheerful temper, and as we galloped along he chanted an Indian song, which con-^[533]sisted of the words 'Ah ge lay loo, Ah ge lay loo,' expressed in various keys.

After a ride of some leagues in a rather more open but still ¹³³ undulating country, a break in the Pampas was reached. Hills of irregular and picturesque outlines, with labyrinthine valleys or ravines, not running in parallel order, but communicating with each other, occupied an extensive district, and though travelling was considerably more difficult, yet the change in the aspect of nature was grateful after the barren monotony of the plains.

We halted in an Indian encampment, situated in a valley ³⁶¹ underneath a peaked hill called 'Otiti,' where there were pools of fresh and salt water in close proximity. Amongst the incense and thorn bushes, which grow at intervals in ¹³⁷ these regions, we passed to-day another description of shrub with a thick rough bark, which is readily detached, and leaves a long rattail-like sort of twig. From the Rio Gallegos the soil had become generally of a yellower colour than on the ¹³⁴ south side of that river, although in the valleys and hollows

- 134 dark peaty earth was generally to be found, and the surface of the Pampas had assumed a more desolate appearance, being strewn with small pebbles, and studded with bushes—
- 137 generally of a thorny species. Round clumps of prickly thistles—which burn like tinder on applying a lighted match—and a few stray tufts of withered grass, only made more desolate the hungry barrenness of the deserts, over which
- 136 the wind blew with cutting violence, yet they are the home of large herds of guanaco, ostriches, puma, and armadillo, though the latter were at this period comfortably hibernating.
- 005 Next morning no horses were visible, and as time went on till ten o'clock without any appearance we all began to suspect Indian treachery. Sam volunteered the remark that if they (the Indians) had played us such a trick, he would go and clear all their animals out the following evening. This threat there was fortunately no occasion for him to put into execution, as the troop proved only to have strayed into
- 439 another valley. As we were now nearing Santa Cruz, which the last of the Indians were just leaving, having completed their trade and finished all the grog, we saw numerous
- 202 columns of smoke, caused by their hunting parties. After
- 005 passing the broken ground and reaching the high Pampa, Sam and myself rode on ahead, amusing ourselves by fruitlessly chasing guanaco or ostrich, but Sam's dexterity with the bolas was frustrated by his being mounted on a horse belonging to the expedition and unused to this work.
- 133 Towards evening, after again passing numerous salt lagoons, we came to a descent of 300 or 400 feet leading to a valley containing a large salina, and halting, made our fire by the side of a spring, near which, Sam informed me, were the graves of two Indians, which he mentioned with the deepest respect and in an awe-stricken undertone.
- 075 Our signal smoke, which was as much to attract Indians as to give the direction of our route to Gallegos and Jaria, was soon responded to from the opposite hills on the northern

000 through which I passed were viewed with a calmness that had been before unattainable, and which is now scarcely credible, on recollection. So true is it that our strength is unknown to ourselves till it is thoroughly tested.

The hope of immediate release, however, was at an end; my savage captors, it seemed, must be looked upon as for an indefinite period my masters and companions; and I had nothing at present to do but to divert myself by a study of their manners and habits; to consult my safety by a close study of their character, and of the ways and means by which so to adapt my deportment to it as to win their confidence, to disarm hostility, and to seize opportunities.

133 PATAGONIA, as it offered itself to my observation, more than answered the descriptions of geographers, — bleak, barren, desolate, beyond description or conception, — only to be appreciated by being seen. Viewed from the Straits of Magellan, it rises in gentle undulations or terraces. Far as the eye can reach, in a westerly direction, it assumes a more broken and hilly appearance, and long ranges of mountains, extending from north to south, divide the eastern

• [134] from the western shore. The soil is of a light, sandy character, and bears nothing worthy the name of a tree. Low [137] bushes, or underwood, are tolerably abundant, and in the valleys a coarse, wiry grass grows luxuriantly. Streams [132] of water are rare. The natives draw their supplies principally from springs or pools in the valleys, the water of which is generally brackish and disagreeable.

136 The variety of animal is nearly as limited as that of vegetable productions. The guanaco, a quadruped allied to the lama, and with some resemblance to the camelopard,

DESCRIPTION OF THE SOUTHERN COAST OF THAT REGION
OF THE SOUTH COMMONLY CALLED PATAGONIA

The harbor of Santa Elena is a good one for all types of ships and
 133 is situated on the 40° line of southern latitude. Sweet water is to be found
 only in a glade to the west, filled by the winter rains as they are held by
 [342] ridge which lies across the glade's mouth near the beach. Inland, some
 four or five leagues, the Indians reported the presence of some small
 [137] springs. All the terrain is rocky except for the small valleys, in which
 343 there is good grass and an abundance of espavillo firewood. The Indian
 chief who rules this section is called Ayo; his jurisdiction stretches up
 [221] to the harbor of San Gregorio. He said that from the coast westward
 toward the mountains there are some 70 leagues of habitable land, but
 the land beyond that limit is absolutely uninhabitable by man or beast.
 136 Hares are very abundant here, being like small antelope and very good
 to eat; quirquinchos, [type of armadillo--Translator] also good eating,
 [145] have shells which the Indians use as pans or plates; pumas have flesh
 which is very savory, juicy and tender, and is like the roasted breast of
 a turkey; there are a few guanaco too, some partridges and many
 [146] ostriches. The Indians subsist on all of these, as also on horse meat,
 which they have in great abundance and which is their favorite food.
 Fish, in which the harbor abounds, is of the kind which we call borriquete
 and pejerrey, both of which are delicious.

133 The harbor of San Gregorio is situated at 45° 4' latitude south.
 It is not very secure and its entrance is bad owing to its rock strewn bot-
 tom and weak anchorage. The terrain which surrounds it is rocky and
 rugged; one must go inland some 5 leagues [65] before striking water.
 The mountain chain is about as far from this harbor as it is from that of
 Santa Elena, according to the Indians. This land is even more sterile
 [134] than the former. The Indian chief who controls these lands is called
 136 Gorgona. The game and fish are the same as in the previous place but
 [134] the Indians do not eat the fish since they do not know how to catch them
 and lack the necessary implements for doing so. In the cove called
 Camarones there is an abundance of shrimp, as there is also in San Julian
 and Puerto Desierto, and a kind of fish called gallo; but as already men-
 [143] tioned, the Indians do not make use of them. There is here quite a lot
 of espavillo firewood, and the rock is very solid and hard.

133 The gulf of San Jose is south of cape Matas, which is at the same
 latitude as San Gregorio; from the point at which its mouth begins to
 cape Blanco, there are 80 leagues. The northern shores have been ex-
 plored by small ships to a point about 40 leagues to the west. There are